

Iraqi Counter-Terrorist Force assaults objective

CJSOTF-AP Public Affairs

Earlier this year, Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force – Arabian Peninsula (CJSOTF-AP) was tasked to target information regarding suspected insurgents behind the April 2004 attack on a 724th Transportation Company fuel convoy.

The mission was given to the Iraqi Special Operations Force (ISOF) Brigade. The ISOF Brigade consists of the Iraqi Counter-Terrorist Force (ICTF), the 36th Commando Battalion, the Brigade headquarters, and a partially constituted support battalion.

The ISOF Brigade was formed, equipped and trained by the 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne), and is currently advised by both 10th SFG (A) and 3rd SFG (A). The ISOF Brigade is commanded by an Iraqi brigadier general and assisted by U.S. Special Forces advisory teams.

In January, the ISOF Brigade conducted its first-ever brigade-level operation to capture 13 individuals believed to be involved in the attack on the 724th Transportation Company, and to gather intelligence concerning the disposition of those still missing from the attack on the vehicle convoy. The operation was led by the ISOF Brigade commander and U.S. SF advisers. Executing units included the ICTF and the 36th Commando Battalion advised by five SF Operational Detachment "A" Teams from 10th SFG (A) and 3rd SF, a Navy Special Warfare Task Unit, a mechanized infantry company and SOF aviation assets.

The combined, joint force conducted simultaneous air and ground assaults on four separate objectives. The Iraqi Counter-Terrorist Force infiltrated two assault troops via MH-53 into landing zones and began its assault on the objective this spring.

The ICTF rapidly cleared six separate buildings, began a search of the area, and detained four of the targeted individuals. During a search of the buildings, the ICTF found U.S. Army materiel and equipment, and confiscated numerous weapons and ammunition.

The 36th Commando Battalion conducted a ground assault convoy into the objective area, and conducted near simultaneous breaches of 10 separate structures. Subsequent searches of the buildings and tactical questioning of detainees led to numerous follow-on objectives and ultimately resulted in the capture of three of the targeted individuals.



Naval Special Warfare personnel conducted simultaneous air assaults via HH-60 on two objectives, detaining six individuals. Upon completion of the raids, the assault force exfiltrated via ground convoy back to base without incident.

Members of the 36th Iraqi Commando Battalion provided security for the assault force during the operation. The operation was an overwhelming success, both operationally and strategically, according to an operations officer. Interrogation of the detainees and exploitation of captured material yielded follow-on targets. More importantly, the operation provided the Iraqi populace with increased confidence in their security forces, and validated the partnership between U.S. Special Operations Forces and the special forces of America's newest Middle Eastern partner against terrorism.

Iraqi Special Operations Forces practice rappelling.



An Iraqi special operator fires at a target during range training with U.S. Special Forces.



An Army Special Forces Soldier shows Iraqi Commandos the proper technique on how to walk to a target, raise their weapon, and fire during training at their firebase in Mosul, Iraq. The commandos were drilled on how to approach and fire two shots into a target the size of a body. The commandos were sent up from Baghdad to help rid Mosul of insurgents before the elections.